In the claims.

Please amend the claims as follows:

1.   (currently amended)   A virtual private network (VPN) gateway for interfacing two or more virtual private networks (VPNs) to one or more external networks, the external network or networks having a different addressing scheme or schemes to those of the VPNs, the VPN gateway having a network address translator (NAT) shared by the VPNs for converting VPN addresses of entities within the VPNs to addresses of the external network, ~~the VPN gateway providing a plurality of virtual routers, respective ones of said plurality of virtual routers being connected to respective ones of said two or more VPNs such that each virtual router is in the address space of a respective one of said two or more VPNs~~ the NAT comprising a source and destination NAT, arranged such that entities in the external networks appear to one of the VPNs to have an address within an address range of the respective VPN.

2.   (cancelled)

3.   (currently amended)   The VPN gateway of claim [[2]] 1, the entities in the external networks comprising at least one of: a call server, a SIP proxy, a web server, a storage server, a video server, a mail server, an H.323 gateway, a telephony client, or a telephony media gateway.

4.   (original)   The VPN gateway of claim 1, the external network address used for each VPN entity being unique in the corresponding external network.

5.   (previously presented)   The VPN gateway of claim 1 having one or more physical or logical interface ports, and being arranged to determine an identity of each of the VPNs based on which one or more physical or logical interface port on the VPN gateway is used to couple the respective VPN.

6.   (original)   The VPN gateway of claim 1, the VPNs each comprising a part of an Internet Protocol (IP) network.

7.   (original) The VPN gateway of claim 6 where the multiple VPNs use overlapping private IP addressing schemes.

8.   (original) The VPN gateway of claim 6, being arranged to provide protocol conversion.

9.   (original) The VPN gateway of claim 1, the VPNs being arranged to use at least one of ATM, Frame Relay, MPLS or IP.

10.   (original) The VPN gateway of claim 1 arranged to couple communication sessions having one end in one of the VPNs and another end in the external network, the sessions being controlled by a server.

11.   (previously presented) The VPN gateway of claim 10, the communication sessions being one of data sessions, telephony calls, or video calls.

12.   (previously presented) The VPN gateway of claim 10, arranged to communicate to the external network entities the VPN identity associated with a given communication session.

13.   (currently amended) A method of using a virtual private network (VPN) gateway to interface two or more VPNs to one or more external networks, the external network or networks having different addressing schemes to those of the VPNs, the VPN gateway having a network address translator (NAT), the method having the steps of using the VPN gateway for passing information between the two or more VPNs and the one or more external networks, ~~and~~ converting VPN addresses of entities within the two or more VPNs to addresses of the external network, ~~providing in the VPN gateway a plurality of virtual routers, and connecting respective ones of said plurality of virtual routers to respective ones of said two or more VPNs such that each virtual router is in the address space of a respective one of said two or more VPNs~~ the NAT comprising a source and destination NAT, arranged such that entities in the external networks appear to one of the VPNs to have an address within an address range of the respective VPN.

14.   (cancelled).

15.   (original) A method of offering a virtual packet network service using the gateway of claim 1.

16.   (previously presented) A node suitable for use as part of a network, the node having a VPN gateway as set out in claim 1.

17.   (previously presented) A computer readable medium encoded with software for carrying out the method of claim 13.

18 and 19. (cancelled)